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131251Z Mar 02

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INFO	LOG-00	NP-00	AID-00	AMAD-00	CIAE-00	INL-00	DODE-00
	SRPP-00	DS-00	EB-00	EUR-00	VC-00	H-01	TEDE-00
	INR-00	IO-00	LAB-01	L-00	VCE-00	AC-01	NSAE-00
	OIC-02	OMB-01	OPIC-01	PA-00	PC-01	PM-00	PRS-00
	ACE-00	P-00	SP-00	SSO-00	STR-00	TRSE-00	USIE-00
	ECA-00	PMB-00	DSCC-00	PRM-00	DRL-02	G-00	NFAT-00
	SAS-00	SWCI-00	/010W				

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FM AMEMBASSY HARARE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1186
INFO NSC WASHDC IMMEDIATE
OAU COLLECTIVE
ALL EUROPEAN UNION POST COLLECTIVE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 HARARE 000661

SIPDIS

NSC FOR SENIOR AFRICA DIRECTOR JENDAYI FRAZER
LONDON FOR CHARLES GURNEY
PARIS FOR CHARLES NEARY
NAIROBI FOR TERRY PFLAUMER

E.O. 12958: DECL: 03/13/12

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [ZI](#)

SUBJECT: MUGABE DECLARED WINNER OF ZIMBABWE PRESIDENTIAL
ELECTION; MDC LEAVES ITS OPTIONS OPEN

REF: HARARE 644

CLASSIFIED BY POLITICAL OFFICER TODD FAULK FOR REASONS:
1.5 (B) AND (D).

1. (C) SUMMARY: REGISTRAR-GENERAL TOBAIWA MUDEDE HAS
DECLARED PRESIDENT ROBERT MUGABE THE WINNER OF
ZIMBABWE'S MARCH 9-11 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION. HE BEAT
HIS STRONGEST CHALLENGER IN 22 YEARS BY 427,000 VOTES,
OR 56 PERCENT TO 42 PERCENT. THE NATURE OF SOME OF THE
RESULTS, ESPECIALLY EXTRAORDINARILY HIGH FIGURES FOR
MUGABE IN MASHONALAND DISTRICTS, RAISE CONCERNS OF VOTE-
RIGGING AND FRAUD. INSUFFICIENT VOTER TURNOUT FOR AREAS
OF MDC STRENGTH WAS A KEY FACTOR. MDC PRESIDENT MORGAN
TSVANGIRAI REJECTED THE RESULTS AND CALLED THE ELECTION

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"ILLEGITIMATE." HARARE AND OTHER MAJOR URBAN AREAS
REMAIN CALM, BUT THE ARMY AND POLICE PRESENCE HAS
INCREASED. END SUMMARY.

THE RESULTS ARE IN

2. (U) SHORTLY AFTER NOON LOCAL TIME ON MARCH 13,
REGISTRAR-GENERAL TOBAIWA MUDEDE DECLARED ON STATE
TELEVISION AND RADIO THAT PRESIDENT ROBERT MUGABE HAD
BEEN DULY ELECTED TO ANOTHER SIX-YEAR TERM. THE
DECLARATION FOLLOWED THE CONSTITUENCY-BY-CONSTITUENCY
ANNOUNCEMENT OF RESULTS THAT BEGAN IN THE EVENING OF
MARCH 12 AND CONTINUED THROUGH THE NIGHT AND MORNING OF
MARCH 13. THE NATIONWIDE FINAL RESULTS ARE BELOW

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(PERCENTAGE FIGURES BASED ON TOTAL VOTES LESS SPOILED
BALLOTS):

ROBERT MUGABE (ZANU-PF)	1,685,212 (56.20%)
MORGAN TSVANGIRAI (MDC)	1,258,401 (41.95%)
WILSON KUMBULA (ZANU)	31,358 (1.05%)
SHAKESPEARE MAYA (NAGG)	11,906 (0.40%)
PAUL SIWELA (INDEPENDENT)	11,871 (0.40%)

3. (C) MUGABE'S EASY SURPASSING OF THE 50 PERCENT MARK
MEANS THERE WILL BE NO RUNOFF ELECTION. THE MARGIN OF
VICTORY OF NEARLY 427,000 VOTES WAS WIDER THAN EXPECTED.
THE THREE OTHER CANDIDATES WERE EVEN LESS OF A FACTOR
THAN ANTICIPATED, GARNERING LESS THAN 2 PERCENT OF THE
VOTE BETWEEN THEM. THE TOTAL NUMBER OF SPOILED BALLOTS,
132,000, OR 4.2 PERCENT OF TOTAL VOTES CAST WAS SOMEWHAT
HIGHER THAN IN THE 2000 PARLIAMENTARY ELECTION. THE
REGISTRAR-GENERAL DID NOT ANNOUNCE THE RESULTS OF THE
HARARE AND CHITUNGWIZA MAYORAL AND COUNCIL ELECTIONS,
NOR DID HE SAY WHEN HE WOULD. IT SHOULD BE NOTED THAT
NO INDEPENDENT CONFIRMATION OF THE RESULTS IS YET
AVAILABLE. RINDAI CHIPFUNDE OF THE ZIMBABWE ELECTION

SUPPORT NETWORK (ZESN), AN UMBRELLA ORGANIZATION COMPRISING LOCAL NGOS, TOLD US THAT ZESN WAS STILL COMPILING REPORTS FROM ITS OBSERVERS AT COUNTING CENTERS. DAVID COLTART, AN MDC MP AND THE PARTY'S ELECTION AGENT FOR BULAWAYO SOUTH, HOWEVER, DID CONFIRM THAT THE NUMBERS ANNOUNCED FOR THAT CONSTITUENCY ARE CORRECT.

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CONCERNS OF FRAUD

14. (C) A SCAN OF THE RESULTS BY CONSTITUENCY AND A VARIETY OF REPORTS RAISE SERIOUS CONCERNS ABOUT THE CONDUCT OF THE POLL AND THE LEVEL OF INTIMIDATION IN THE PRE-ELECTION PERIOD. NEARLY ALL CONSTITUENCIES SHOW INCREASES IN THE NUMBER OF VOTES FOR MUGABE OVER THE 2000 PARLIAMENTARY ELECTION FIGURES, EVEN IN URBAN AREAS. IN ZANU-PF'S MASHONALAND STRONGHOLD, THE NUMBER OF VOTES FOR MUGABE INCREASED 20 TO 30 PERCENT OVER 2000, WHILE VOTES FOR TSVANGIRAI CHANGED ONLY marginally. PART OF THE INCREASE FOR MUGABE CAN BE ATTRIBUTED TO HIS NATIONWIDE NAME RECOGNITION VERSUS THE LACK OF NAME RECOGNITION FOR SOME OF ZANU-PF'S PARLIAMENTARY CANDIDATES IN 2000. HOWEVER, THE HUGE INCREASE IN MASHONALAND NUMBERS (THE MARGIN WAS 15 TO 1 IN SOME DISTRICTS) GIVE RISE TO SUSPICIONS OF VOTE TAMPERING AND BALLOT BOX STUFFING IN THAT PROVINCE:

-- IN A PRESS BRIEFING MARCH 12, THE MDC STATED THAT AT 34 POLLING STATIONS IN MASHONALAND, ITS POLLING AGENTS WERE CHASED AWAY, ABDUCTED OR ARRESTED, SEALS ON BALLOT BOXES WERE BROKEN, OR THE MDC WAS NOT ALLOWED TO AFFIX ITS SEALS TO THE BALLOT BOXES. FOUR OF ITS POLLING

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AGENTS WERE ARRESTED BEFORE THE COUNTING PROCESS BEGAN. MOST OF THE INCIDENTS OCCURRED IN MASHONALAND CENTRAL. AT ITS PRESS CONFERENCE MARCH 13, THE MDC ASSERTED THAT ZANU-PF MILITIA PREVENTED ITS POLLING AGENTS FROM DEPLOYING TO 52 PERCENT OF RURAL POLLING STATIONS.

--RESULTS FROM 6 OF THE 10 MASHONALAND CENTRAL CONSTITUENCIES WERE NOT ANNOUNCED UNTIL AFTER 107 OTHER CONSTITUENCIES, INCLUDING MANY FROM HARARE. TRANSPORT DIFFICULTIES CANNOT ACCOUNT FOR THIS. MASHONALAND CENTRAL WOULD HAVE HAD MORE TIME THAN ANY OTHER PROVINCE, OTHER THAN HARARE, TO CARRY OUT FRAUD.

15. (C) FOR TSVANGIRAI, THE NUMBER OF VOTES INCREASED ONLY marginally, EVEN IN THE MDC'S URBAN STRONGHOLDS. IN BULAWAYO AND SOME AREAS OF MATABELELAND, THE NUMBER OF VOTES ACTUALLY DECREASED. VOTER TURNOUTS OF LESS THAN 50 PERCENT IN BULAWAYO AND MATABELELAND SOUTH COULD BE AN INDICATION OF VOTER APATHY, BUT THE WIDESCALE

INTIMIDATION OF VOTERS IN THOSE TWO AREAS JUST WEEKS BEFORE THE ELECTION IS ALSO A LIKELY FACTOR. ZANU-PF MILITIA AND WAR VETERANS HAVE TARGETED MANY OTHER AREAS OF THE COUNTRY FOR INTIMIDATION AND VIOLENT ATTACKS IN THE LAST YEAR. THE AMANI TRUST, A WIDELY RESPECTED HUMAN RIGHTS ORGANIZATION, IS COMPILING AN ANALYSIS OF THE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION RESULTS WITH REPORTED INCIDENTS OF POLITICAL VIOLENCE. OTHER FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO TSVANGIRAI'S DEFEAT:

-- A LOW NATIONAL TURNOUT RATE OF 55.8 PERCENT DOOMED TSVANGIRAI'S CHANCES OF OVERCOMING MUGABE'S CONSIDERABLE

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ARRAY OF ELECTORAL MANIPULATION TOOLS AND STATE RESOURCES. MUGABE'S COUP DE GRACE WAS CUTTING THE NUMBER OF URBAN POLLING STATIONS IN HALF, WHICH LED TO MASSIVE VOTER QUEUES AND ONLY A 50 PERCENT VOTER TURNOUT IN HARARE, TSVANGIRAI'S STRONGEST BASE OF SUPPORT (REFTEL). ALTHOUGH PROBABLY NO MORE THAN TEN THOUSAND OR SO WISHING TO VOTE WERE UNABLE TO DO SO AT THE END OF THE THIRD DAY OF POLLING, MANY TENS OF THOUSANDS WERE LIKELY TOO DISCOURAGED BY THE KILOMETER-LONG LINES AND WAITS OF UP TO 30 HOURS IN DAYS ONE AND TWO.

THE MDC'S REACTION

16. (C) AT A PACKED NOON PRESS CONFERENCE IN HARARE ON MARCH 13, MDC PRESIDENT MORGAN TSVANGIRAI REJECTED THE ELECTION RESULTS AND DESCRIBED THE POLLING AS "THE BIGGEST FRAUD HE HAS EVER WITNESSED." HE STATED THAT "THE RESULTS DO NOT REFLECT THE WILL OF THE PEOPLE AND ARE ILLEGITIMATE." HE CONCLUDED BY SAYING THE MDC REMAINS COMMITTED TO PEACEFUL CHANGE. IN RESPONSE TO REPORTERS' QUESTIONS, TSVANGIRAI SAID HE HAS NO INTENTION OF LEAVING THE COUNTRY OR ABANDONING HIS PEOPLE. HE DEMURRED ON WHAT THE MDC WOULD DO NEXT, BUT INDICATED THAT COURT ACTION WAS ONE OF ITS OPTIONS. HE REITERATED THAT HE BELIEVED THE ELECTION HAD BEEN "MASSIVELY RIGGED." IN AN ASIDE WITH POLOFF, MDC MP TENDAI BITI SAID THAT THE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION WAS JUST "ROUND 1" AND THE MDC WOULD BE THERE FOR "ROUND 6." HE CONTINUED THAT HE HAD NO EXPECTATION OF SUCCESS WITH ANY
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MDC LEGAL ACTION, BUT THAT IT SHOULD BE CARRIED OUT IN ANY CASE. COURT ACTION IS JUST ONE OF THE OPTIONS THE MDC HAS AT ITS DISPOSAL, BITI CONCLUDED.

ALL IS QUIET ... SO FAR

17. (C) SO FAR, THE REACTION ON THE GROUND IN HARARE IS A PEACEFUL ONE. POST HAD HEARD A REPORT OF A SCUFFLE IN THE HIGH-DENSITY SUBURB OF MBARE, TO WHICH POLICE RESPONDED. EMBASSY OFFICERS TOURING THE AREA AND OTHER SUBURBS SAW NO SIGNS OF DISTURBANCES. POLICE ROADBLOCKS HAVE BEEN ERECTED ALL OVER THE CITY, BUT FOR THE MOST PART, THEY ARE ONLY SLOWING AND NOT STOPPING MOTORISTS. WE HAVE RECEIVED OTHER REPORTS OF ARMY DEPLOYMENTS TO BULAWAYO AND GWERU IN THE LAST 24 HOURS. ANOTHER REPORT STATED THAT ARMY UNITS HAD SURROUNDED MDC HEADQUARTERS IN BULAWAYO AND WERE DEPLOYED TO THE BULAWAYO AIRPORT, POSSIBLY TO PREVENT MDC LEADERS FROM LEAVING THE COUNTRY. WE WILL REPORT ON NEW DEVELOPMENTS AS THEY OCCUR.

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